

PUR 4800-05FD Public Relations Campaigns

Spring 2017 Thursdays 10 - E1 WEIM 1094

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COURSE DESCRIPTION:

PUR 4800 is the capstone course for the undergraduate program in public relations. As such, it draws heavily on students' previous training in principles, techniques, writing, and research methods to develop and partially implement a public relations campaign for an actual organizational client. Students will use the principles and techniques of public relations to analyze case studies, track current public relations issues, create various communication campaigns, and solve real-world problems. The additional advanced learning will come not so much from the instructor or the materials but in the application--the creation of comprehensive communications campaigns that truly communicate.

Public Relations Campaigns is a capstone course that introduces students to the process of campaign development, management, and evaluation using the principles and strategies of public relations and agency management. Recreating real-world professional settings, this course marks your transition from student to professional.

The aim of the course is to help you master the elements of a strategic communication campaign through direct experience as a practitioner. As much as is possible in a classroom environment, I will try to recreate the experience of earning and working with a real-world client.

This course marks your transition from student to professional. You will work as a team with a real-world client, which implies I expect you to conduct yourself like a professional in your interaction with me, your teammates and your client. This also means that you will be evaluated on the quality, creativity and professionalism of your work product.

You will develop a robust, strategic, measurable and actionable strategic communications plan. While you will be working in teams, this course will provide you with a platform to showcase your individual creative talents and knowledge of communication programs, strategy and tactics. Emphasis in the course is on the development of various campaign components. Other important aspects of the course include team participation and development of presentation skills.

This course will add another accomplishment to your undergraduate portfolio. You will be able to show prospective employers a smart, creative and well-fined campaign.

This is an exciting opportunity to bring together everything you've learned through your coursework in this program (research methods, writing, strategy and visual communications). This course is centered on you and your learning needs, with ample time and opportunity for hands-on learning.

COURSE FORMAT

Class time will be dedicated to lectures/discussions and/or time reserved for team meetings and work sessions. Students should prepare to dedicate ample time outside of classroom hours to complete their campaign projects. For the campaign-planning portion, this course will employ the counseling-firm format in which class members form account teams, representing the same organization client. The requirements and expectations of the Team Project will be as rigorous and demanding as students' first job in public relations.

COURSE GOALS

PUR 4800 is an applied undergraduate course designed to provide students in public relations with a capstone experience. As such, it draws heavily on your previous training in public relations principles, research, strategy, writing, and visual communication to develop a public relations campaign for an actual organizational client. The course's major goals are:

- Understand and be able to develop, execute and evaluate a successful strategic communications plan.
- Consult and advise an actual client on strategic public relations campaign development
- Understand how to earn and work with a client in a way that demonstrates confidence, professionalism and an ability to learn relevant content quickly.
- Develop the skill of working effectively with an account management team on behalf of a client.
- Learn to think strategically and courageously on behalf of a client or cause.
- Develop client communication skills, including an ability to listen, to understand and respond to client expectations.
- Learn to represent yourself as a knowledgeable, competent and confident professional.
- develop skills in strategic public relations management based on an analysis of current and historical case studies
- Understand the role and importance of research in responding to potential or emerging public relations problems or potential opportunities.
- Apply strategic, creative thinking in the development of a public relations campaign and collateral materials

RECOMMENDED TEXT:

Bobbit, R., & Sullivan, R. (2009). *Developing the Public Relations Campaigns: A Team-Based Approach* 2nd ed. Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

ADDITIONAL READING

Students are expected to read news (local, national, and international) and industry and academic journals regularly. Higher levels of professional competence and authority demand not only awareness of current news events but also an applied understanding of how economic, political, and social trends affect the communication professions. Suggested resources include, but are not limited to, *Journal of Public Relations Research*, *Public Relations Review*, *Public Relations Journal* (<http://www.prsa.org/prjournal/>), and *PRism* (<http://www.prismjournal.org>). Other helpful practitioner-based resources include The Institute for Public Relations

(www.instituteforpr.com), PRSA (www.prsa.org) and FPRA (www.fpra.org).

Course Professionalism

Professional decorum is expected at all times. You are expected to adhere to workplace norms of collegial and respectful interaction. That specifically means that I expect you to arrive on time, not speak when another student, the instructor or guests are speaking or use cell phones, laptops or other electronic devices – unless as an assignment for this course - during the class period. You are expected to treat with respect the diverse perspectives of your fellow students. Violations of these expectations may result in students being asked to leave class and a lowering of your grade.

A Few Notes about Writing for this Course

You are expected to demonstrate excellent writing throughout this course. I will grade written assignments with care, and expect that you will write with the same responsibility and precision you applied to your previous writing classes.

In this course we will adhere to APA style when writing your reports. All work completed for this course is expected to be your own original work. There is a zero-tolerance policy for plagiarism. You are expected to follow the University of Florida policy on academic honesty without exception. I will subtract points for factual and mathematical errors, misspellings of names, organizations or misuse of terms associated with relevant content or research.

Grammatical errors, syntax and misspellings are unacceptable in upper-level college writing, particularly writing by public relations students.

OTHER CLASS POLICIES

- The University of Florida Honor Code applies to all activities associated with this class.
- Class members are expected to read the assigned reading (if any) before class and participate actively in class discussion.
- All work will be judged by professional standards. All out-of-class work must be well written, typed and visually appealing, with no spelling or grammatical errors.
- I will make every effort to adhere to this syllabus and grading system, but reserve the right to make necessary changes.
- I will be available to assist students by appointment, or via email and will provide you with your grades on assignments as soon as possible.

Students with Special Needs

- Disability Accommodations: Students needing academic accommodations for a disability must first contact Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565) to verify the disability and establish eligibility for accommodations. They should then schedule an appointment with the professor to make appropriate arrangements.
- Religious Observance: Religiously observant students wishing to be absent on holidays that require missing class should notify their professors in writing at the beginning of the semester, and should discuss with them, in advance, acceptable ways of making up any work missed because of the absence.
- Excused Absences for University Extracurricular Activities: Students participating in an officially sanctioned, scheduled University extracurricular activity should be given the

opportunity to make up any graded assignments missed as a result of their participation. It is the responsibility of the student to make arrangements with the instructor prior to any missed scheduled examination or other missed assignment for making up the work.

Class Attendance Policy

Prompt attendance for this course is required. Arriving late (more than 10 minutes) or leaving class early will result in an absence for that class. Unexcused absences are unacceptable. Bottom line: Please timely notify your team members and your instructor if you are not able to attend.

Academic Honesty

The work you submit for this course must be your own. It must be original for this course. You must never use direct or paraphrased material from any source, including websites, without attribution. Please don't submit anything that you wrote for another class, or that you wrote as a volunteer or intern. Please don't submit anything that was written for any purpose other than the given assignment. Incidents will be handled in accordance with UF policies that address cheating and unethical academic behavior, specifically the UF Honor Code and the Academic Honesty Guidelines. As a consequence, any case of academic dishonesty will result in a failing grade for this course. I will follow University Guidelines for any offense. Any time you complete an assignment for this course, please clearly attribute the source of your information, including information obtained from organizations' websites or internal documents.

Grading

Each assignment – except the client pitch proposal and presentation - will be graded on a 100-point scale and weighted accordingly. I will first grade for content, and then subtract points for errors in style, grammar, and factual errors. Each grammatical or spelling error will count for five points off. AP or APA style violations will count for 10 points off your grade, and factual errors including misspellings of client names or misuse or core terms associated with the field in which your client works will count for 50 points off. I will award points based on your demonstrated understanding of the assignment, the level of creativity, and your ability to write compelling, accurate and precise copy.

Individual Assignments (25%)	
Class Attendance and Participation	25%
Team Assignments (75%)	
Client Agendas and Notes	10%
Campaign Preparation Assignments	20%
Final Strategic Communications Plan and Presentation	30%
Client Assessment of your plan	5%
Peer Evaluation	10%

Class Participation**25 percent**

You must be fully present during class, contribute to discussions and demonstrate through your comments that you have read and understood assigned readings and benefited from previous class discussions.

- Participation points can be earned via the following in-class exercises. NOTE: None of the following in-class exercises may be made-up.
 - Five-Minute “In the News”: Every student is encouraged to bring in a PR case from CURRENT events every week for a 5-minute informal discussion and critique. Such cases can be found in the news, PR trade publications, the PRSA website, etc.
 - In-Class Reports: “What points are most clear to you?” and “What do you still not understand?”
 - Q&A/Class Discussions: Your level of engagement and participation in class discussions and work attitude throughout the semester.

Client Agendas and Notes (three sets - one per client meeting)**10 percent**

You and your team will prepare agendas for each interaction with your client. You will also capture the proceedings of those conversations in notes. There will be at least THREE meetings that you are required to hold with your client (face-to-face, conference calls or emails). Face-to-face meetings are preferred (if possible). Please adhere to the dates in the syllabus.

For each client meeting, your team will prepare an agenda and email it to me 24 hours prior to the meeting. Your team will also capture the proceedings of each meeting in a note. These notes concisely summarize the meeting’s purpose and its results (conclusions and decisions reached/unreached during the meeting). It also introduces next steps to be taken by both the client and the team. Email the note to me within 24 hours after your client meeting. At the same time, provide your client with a copy of the note.

Peer Evaluation**10 percent**

Your team members will each evaluate your contribution to the campaign – after each assignment. I will carefully review their assessments of your commitment and contribution to arrive at your peer evaluation grade. Peer Evaluation for EACH assignment: Utilizing confidential forms, team members will evaluate each other’s contributions for each of the four assignments.

Campaign Preparation**20 percent**

You will complete a series of graded assignments as a team as you develop your campaign. Each of these assignments should be prepared as if you were presenting them to the client for review. That means they should reflect professionalism in presentation and content. As noted earlier, factual and grammatical errors will not be tolerated, and will count against your grade for the given assignment. These include mathematical errors, misspellings of the client’s name or misuse of terms associated with relevant content or research. I will evaluate and comment on each of these four assignments. You should revise your work according to my comments and integrate your revisions to the final strategic communications plan.

Final Strategic Communications Plan and Presentation

30 percent

Your team's final strategic plan and presentation is the most important part of your grade. You will submit a highly detailed written plan as a team, and present the plan as a team. I expect each member of the team to contribute equally and substantially to each.

When you present your strategic communications plan, you are welcome to use PowerPoint or Prezi if there are specific points that will be amplified using visual aids—for example, charts, photographs, compelling quotes or images associated with the work. Use PowerPoint and similar software wisely – not as a presentation crutch.

Client and Professional Assessment of Your Plan

5 percent

Your client will complete an assessment of your plan, the extent to which it meets their needs and the value it contributes to the organization. You will receive a copy of the assessment form when instructions for this assignment are given.

Grades

Grading Scale: 92-100 = A, 90-91 = A-, 87-89 = B+, 82-86 = B, 80-81 = B-, 77-79 = C+, 72-76 = C, 70-71 = C-, 67-69 = D+, 62-66 = D, 60-61 = D-, Below 60 = E.

Late Work

No assignments will be accepted after the due date.

The Campaign Team

Depending upon the number of students enrolled, the class will be divided into teams of six to seven people, each group simulating a full-service agency responsible for developing a complete public relations campaign for an actual organization. Generally, each agency will encompass all of the positions discussed below. It's possible that some students in smaller groups may need to assume more than one responsibility, depending on client needs and the particular campaign. Team make-up, position assignments, campaign choices and other details will be discussed as the course progresses. Traditional team positions and general responsibilities:

- **Account executive:** Responsible for overall performance of the group. (Note: AE may be required to meet with the instructor outside of class on scheduled times during the semester and/or to maintain ongoing communications with the professor. Expect to spend extra time managing your team and the team dynamics).
- **Public relations director:** Directs public communications strategies and works with the AE to plan programs of mutual understanding between client and various publics.
- **Research director:** Responsible for secondary and primary research, using focus groups, interviews, surveys, or other techniques necessary to determine target publics, attitudes, and opinions.
- **Copy writing director:** Responsible for all copy/content including style, grammar, references and in-text citations.
- **Creative services director:** Responsible for all art, including presentation visuals.
- **Media director:** Develops media strategy, including selecting major media for the campaign and determining research, frequency, and continuity.

- **Social media director:** Develops social media strategy, including selecting major social media for the campaign and determining research, frequency, tracking and continuity.

Your team will plan, evaluate and present an integrated communications campaign project. In the report, you should justify why and how you used the particular tactics. Writing should be clear and concise. Everyone in your group is equally responsible for producing the final project. This means that the project will be graded as a group project – however – individual evaluation peer assessments will help determine your final grade. Essentially, all in the group may or may not receive the same grade for an assignment, however, a poor assessment may decrease your final grade for the class or that element of the final project.

Class Discussion and Assignment Schedule:

All course materials and requirements, as well as the following schedule, are subject to change as the instructor deems appropriate and necessary. Students are responsible for keeping themselves informed of any changes, and should complete reading assignments prior to class.

Client and In-Class Meetings:

- Email the client and your instructor your notes by 11 p.m. following your meetings with them (latest). Email me the agenda 24 hours prior to your client meeting. ** Bring a one-page agenda to every meeting with me. Report your agency's progress and issues that need to be addressed in the agenda.

Case Discussions:

- For case discussions, each team will select and sign up for one (1) year of case studies from the PRSA Silver Anvil website (available at <http://www.prsa.org/Awards/SilverAnvil/Search>) or the Florida Public Relations Association Golden Image website <http://fpra.org/golden-image-awards/>.
- Each team will read through all the cases of the year and select the best one for analysis and present to the class. Alternatively, you may find a casebook of public relations campaign (approved by the professor). Read through all the cases of the book and select the best one for analysis and presentation. Email me your case no later than the Tuesday prior to the class so that I can distribute to the rest of the class so everyone can read the case and be prepared for discussion.

Final Campaign Project

- The final campaign project requires students to work in teams to research and propose a public relations campaign for an actual client selected by the instructor. A written campaign proposal will be turned in and students will present their campaign design to the client, who will provide oral debriefing. Detailed instructions on the team campaign project are included in this syllabus.
- Notes: Teams will be responsible for providing supplies and other materials, such as presentation binders and prototypes, which are necessary for producing two copies of a written campaign plan and an oral presentation of professional quality.

COURSE SCHEDULE:

Please Note: As the semester progresses, this schedule may change to reflect the progress and needs of the class and work groups.

	Course Topic	Reading Assignment	Assignment Due
Week 1 Jan 5	Course Overview and Syllabus Review An Overview of the Public Relations Campaign Management Process	Chapter 1& 2	Campaign Project Team formed, agency names selected, roles assigned and clients selected. Client proposal and Brand platform assignments distributed.
Week 2 Jan 12	Introductory Client Meetings		
Week 3 Jan 19	Research and Agency Relations	Chapter 3& 4	Client proposal due via email.
Week 4 Jan 26	Team Meetings and Group Work	Individual team meetings with instructor. AEs bring meeting materials to the meeting. Revise based on feedback.	Brand Platform
Week 5 Feb 2	Strategic Planning: Goals, Objectives, Target Audiences	Chapter 5 Case Discussion 1	Meet with client (Meeting 2) to discuss issues/challenges and research plan. Finalize background research.
Week 6 Feb 9	Implementation: Messages and Strategies	Chapter 5 Case Discussion 2	Final primary research plan
Week 7 Feb 16	Implementation: Media Channels	Chapters 6 & 7 Case Discussion 3	Primary research data collection begins.
Week 8 Feb 23	Implementation: Non-media Channels	Chapter 8 Case Discussion 4	Continue data collection and analysis
Week 9 Mar 2	Field Research, Campaign Team Meetings and Progress Report	Individual team meetings with instructor. AEs bring meeting materials (including the draft research report if available, SPSS survey analysis results, and objective portion) to the meeting. Revise based on feedback.	Progress report on research
Week 10	Spring Break!		Validate campaign

Mar 9			objectives with client (meeting 3)
Week 11 Mar 16	Team Work		Formal research report and campaign objectives due via email.
Week 12 Mar 23	Logistics, Evaluation, and Measurement	Chapter 9&10 Case Discussion 5	Programming draft (audience analysis, message strategy, etc.)
Week 13 Mar 30	Professional Responsibility	Chapter 11& 12	Continue working on programming. Preliminary evaluation plan due in class.
Week 14 April 6	Campaign Plan Production	Teams meet in class to complete the draft of the campaign book.	Review campaign plan draft with Instructor.
Week 15 April 13	Plan Review, Revision and Finalization	Teams meet in class for campaign plan book revision, finalization, and presentation drafting.	Review campaign plan draft with Instructor.
Week 16 April 20	Final Presentations		FINAL PRESENTATION & CAMPAIGN PLAN BOOK